



## **Black Hills Bentonite**

Black Hills Bentonite was founded in 1947 in Moorcroft, Wyoming by Harry & Inga Thorson and Al & Margaret Harding. Harry and Al were co-workers at a previous bentonite plant but with a change in management, they parted ways with the company and each other. They rejoined forces in 1947 as they were each in a great place to start their own bentonite company. Their wives agreed, as long as they were included, so Black Hills Bentonite was formed. They purchased and leased property around Wyoming and became involved in politics along the way as Al Harding was State Senate president in 1960.

Tom Thorson, Harry & Inga's son, began working in the family business after graduating from the University of Wyoming in 1960 along with other family members. Decisions were made to close the Moorcroft plant in 1964 and open a Casper plant the same year, the highly visible Black Hills Bentonite plant as seen from West Yellowstone Hwy between downtown Casper and the City of Mills. The company currently operates in five locations around Wyoming; Mills, Upton, Casper, Glenrock and Worland employing approximately 95 Wyoming residents through around the clock operations. According to Larry Madsen, about 85% of the production through Black Hills Bentonite is for clumped cat litter, leaving our furry friends a clean environment for their necessary business.

The City of Mills appreciates the support of Black Hills Bentonite for our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration as a Platinum Sponsor. Without generous public support, our celebration would not be as feasible and entertaining to the community.